undp

update

Vol. 4, no. 21, 14 October 1991
Published by the Public Affairs Division,
United Nations Development Programme,
One UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017

news & events

New York. A US$450,000 UNDP grant was approved on 30 September to fund two upcoming conferences on coal use in China and India. The countries are two of the world's biggest coal producers and consumers. As a result, pollution is a major problem in each nation. In China, for example, discharges of sulphur dioxide -- a toxic gas produced in traditional coal burning methods -- are the third heaviest in the world. Sulphur dioxide is a main contributor to acid rain. Greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide and methane, are two other harmful coal burning by-products.

A host of scientists and environmentalists invited to attend the UNDP-sponsored conferences are expected to advise China and India on how they can reduce their dependency on coal through the use of alternate energy sources. The experts will also help both countries assess coal-related environmental damage, including the potential effect of carbon dioxide emissions on the global climate.

The Chinese conference is to be held in Beijing in December, while the Indian one will be hosted in New Delhi in January. A summary report on both conferences is to be presented in Brazil at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in June 1992.

Brussels. Albania is calling for more relief money to help the government care for its impoverished population and continue economic reforms into 1992. The plea for an extra $100 million in emergency aid was made at a 17 September meeting co-sponsored by UNDP and the Economic Commission for Europe in Brussels. Participants included representatives of the two dozen industrialized nations coordinated by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, known as the G-24, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Albania has already received pledges of about $150 million for emergency and economic reform aid. But government officials insist the country still needs more help because the money currently pledged will not last through the winter.

No specific promises for extra relief funds were made at the Brussels meeting, but representatives of UNDP and the G-24 assured Albanian officials they had no intention of cutting off their support.

Other emergency aid pledges that have already been made for Albania include a health programme, which will be run by the World Health Organization and UNICEF. The programme is being set up to help the country upgrade its medical services, child health care programmes and pharmaceutical supplies.

The G-24 and UNDP are also planning to send a team of experts to Albania to examine ways they can help the country improve its agriculture and industrial enterprises.

Dakar. Representatives of nine Francophone African countries participated in a seminar in the Senegalese capital aimed at educating the participants about ways of fostering technical cooperation with other developing nations. The seminar was supported by UNDP's Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC). The countries that participated in the three-day seminar, which began on 30 September, were: Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

The Dakar conference was similar to another TCDC workshop held in Bangkok, Thailand, on 6-9 August. Eleven members of the Royal Thai Government Department of Technical and Economic Cooperation participated in the event, which was held after the government there approved a TCDC umbrella fund of $8 million.

At both workshops, staff from the Special Unit for TCDC acted as resource persons. An introductory session outlined the philosophy behind TCDC. Another session included a detailed presentation of

u p d

the TCDC/INRES-South data base, containing information on the technical capacities and needs in developing countries. The workshops also included a troubleshooting session in which the participants were to asked to advise their colleagues about ways of locating financing for TCDC projects.

A third TCDC orientation conference is to be held in Ecuador in November.

Tokyo. The Mongolian government can look forward to receiving more relief aid, thanks to the Japanese government, which recently agreed to provide a $35 million low-interest loan for critical imports. The loan was the subject of a two-day conference in Tokyo that was attended by representatives of UNDP and the World Bank, among other organizations. The funds will be used to purchase agricultural equipment, construction material and other imports critical to the country's economic survival.

The 5-6 September meeting of the Mongolian Assistance Group came after the Japanese government approved a $15 million grant for humanitarian aid and economic reform. UNDP's Office for Project Services has been asked to oversee the allocation of that grant.

projects endorsed by the action committee

(all projects subject to modification; sums quoted in US dollars)

4 September 1991

Cambodia. Prolonged civil strife has left Cambodia in turmoil. The physical infrastructure is in serious disrepair. Some 300,000 refugees live in camps along the Thai border. And nearly 200,000 other Cambodians remain displaced by the war.

Early this year, the political situation began to improve. The UN was invited into the country to help foster peace and oversee relief programmes. As part of that effort, UNDP has been asked by the UN Secretary-General to head a fact-finding mission to Cambodia to assess the country's rehabilitation and reconstruction needs.

In conjunction with the mission, a Humanitarian Assistance Operation Unit will be created within the UNDP Liaison Office in Phnom Penh to coordinate emergency aid programmes. The Unit will help gather data, identify humanitarian needs and manage relief operations of both local authorities and donors. It will also assist in infrastructure repair and refugee resettlement efforts.

Another UNDP-run project will help assess the training needs of Cambodians, especially refugees. The war has left the country with a lack of trained or skilled personnel. Training will be provided in Cambodia and overseas, and will focus primarily on agriculture, education, health and basic infrastructure.

Proposed UNDP contributions for the two projects: $12 million. Both projects will be executed by UNDP's Office for Project Services (UNDP/OPS) and will be implemented by the Supreme National Council. (KAM/91/002-KAM/91/003)

Guinea. Political chaos for over 25 years has exacted a heavy toll on Guinea's development. The country's urban centres, including the capital city of Conakry, lack basic services and necessary infrastructure to stimulate economic growth. A First Urban Project was launched in 1985 as part of an economic recovery programme.

The First Project sought to rehabilitate roads, drainage and sanitation and develop housing policies for the urban poor. Despite considerable achievements made in urban development, housing still remains a critical sector. Nearly 70 per cent of the population in Conakry live in undeveloped, overcrowded areas.

To help manage urban sprawl, UNDP is providing technical support for the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing. The Ministry, made up of three Directorates and a Cabinet, will be strengthened to refine and carry out the housing policies through a Second Urban Project. UNDP will help develop a 200-hectare housing site in Lambanyi for low-income families.

Other objectives include introducing a savings and credit plan, improving urban infrastructure and services, and promoting investments and employment. The project is also seeking to develop housing sites outside Conakry and improve legislation for land ownership.

Proposed UNDP contribution: $1,358,450 for experts, engineers, subcontracts and training. The project will be executed by the World Bank and implemented by the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing. (GUI/90/007)

Venezuela. The Venezuelan government launched a $30 million National Investment Plan financed by the World Bank to strengthen institutions involved in public investment programmes. As part of the Plan, UNDP will assist the Ministry of Transport and Communication in the area of

pre-investment programmes and in conducting studies for the formulation of loan requests.

The Ministry is expected, by the end of the project, to improve its capacity in designing pre-investment programmes, preparing loan requests, particularly for the upgrade of a network of urban roads, and proposing measures for improving traffic flow in seven important cities.

Proposed UNDP contribution: $10,500. Government cost-sharing: $4,100,952. Funds are to pay for experts, subcontracts for studies, and training for transportation planning and traffic engineering. The project will be government-executed and implemented by the Ministry of Transport and Communication. (VEN/91/012)

Venezuela. Venezuela's water and sanitation sector is yet another critical area that UNDP is helping to restructure. Regional offices were created to decentralize water and sewage services. To implement the change, the Ministry of the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (MARNR) is seeking financial assistance from the World Bank.

Under this project, the Ministry will be assisted in undertaking baseline studies necessary for securing World Bank loans and for improving water and sanitation systems. A rehabilitation plan that includes expansion of services in Venezuela's capital region and environmental protection for the river Tuy and Maracaibo lake basins will be drawn up.

Other areas of focus include improving legislation for tariff on water supply and sewage services and creating an organizational structure for independent water agencies.

Funds of $4.4 million from government cost-sharing are to pay for experts in institution-building, water and sanitation engineers, subcontracts and study tours. The project will be government-executed in association with UNDP/OPS. It will be implemented by MARNR. (VEN/91/013)

Regional projects:

Africa. Livestock production in Southern Africa is hindered by infestation of African animal trypanosomiasis -- a fatal disease transmitted to livestock by the tsetse fly. Earlier efforts to control the disease were made through training courses for mid-level government staff of member-countries of the Southern Africa Development Coordination Conference (SADCC).

This follow-up phase is seeking to meet the training needs of SADCC countries for controlling animal trypanosomiasis by providing courses for an additional 40 mid-level personnel. A long-term objective is to transform the training facility at the University of Zambia into a regional centre for mid-level personnel of both English-speaking and Francophone countries on the continent.

Proposed UNDP contribution for this phase: $264,000. Third-party cost-sharing from Norway: $571,000. Funds are to pay for training specialists, consultants in conservation, botany and economics of disease control, and travel costs. The project will be executed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN and implemented by the Zambia's Ministry of Agriculture in behalf of SADCC countries. (RAF/91/022)

Africa. Onchocerciasis or river blindness is a debilitating disease that is endemic to countries in West Africa. It is caused by a thread-like parasitic worm passed on to humans by the bite of a female blackfly which lays its eggs at or below water surface in fast flowing rivers.

The Onchocerciasis Control Programme is an international effort established in 1974 at the request of seven countries in the Volta River Basin: Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Niger and Togo. The programme expanded its coverage in 1986 to include the southwest areas: Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and Sierra Leone. To date, river blindness is virtually wiped out in the original seven country areas.

This fourth phase will consolidate previous achievements by expanding vector control in the latter four countries and creating Devolution Units in the Volta River basin countries. The Units will be responsible for monitoring early detection and controlling transmission of the disease by destroying the larvae in infested rivers. The project is also seeking to build institutional capacity for integrating control of onchocerciasis into national health care systems of participating governments.

Proposed UNDP contribution for this phase: $7.5 million for the Onchocerciasis Control Trust Fund managed by the World Bank. The project will be executed by the World Health Organization and implemented by government committees on onchocerciasis control. (RAF/92/001)

READEX FICHE

United Nations
Development Programme
One UN Plaza,
New York, NY 10017

World Development